

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 00607 121520Z

44

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6239

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, NU

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL ENQUIRY ON U.S. INVOLVEMENT WITH
NICARAGUAN SECURITY OPERATIONS

REF: STATE 030083

1. THE COUNTRY TEAM HAS REVIEWED THE QUESTIONS IN REFTEL RAISED
BY SENATOR JAMES ABOUREZK IN HIS LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENT.
THE COUNTRY TEAM RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS RAISED IN
PARAGRAPH 2 OF REFTEL ARE AS FOLLOWS:

(1) WITH REFERENCE TO THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER IN RECENT YEARS
THERE HAVE BEEN ANY U.S. GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL, MILITARY OR
CIVILIAN, INCLUDING CONTRACTEES, FLYING HELICOPTERS OR ANY OTHER
TYPE OF AIRCRAFT IN SUPPORT OF THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT'S
ANTI-GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES, THE ANSWER IS NO. NO U.S. GOVERNMENT
HELICOPTERS OR HELICOPTER PILOTS HAVE OPERATED IN NICARAGUA IN
ANY RECENT TIME EXCEPT ON PUBLICIZED DISASTER RELIEF OR
EXHIBITION TEAMS INVOLVING PORTS PARACHUTISTS. DURING OFFICIAL
VISIT OF SOUTHCOM COMMANDER, GENERAL ROSSON, UGMS.
HELICOPTER CAME INTO NICARAGUA TO PROVIDE IN COUNTRY TRANSPORTATION
FOR BRIEF COURTESY CALLS TO OUTLYING AREAS. FIVE TWO-SEAT OH6
LIGHT OBSERVATION HELICOPTERS WERE SUPPLIED TO THE NICARAGUAN
GOVERNMENT APPROXIMATELY 6 YEARS AGO UNDER THE MILITARY
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PAGE 02 MANAGU 00607 121520Z

ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. THESE ARE EXCLUSIVELY OPERATED BY

THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT AND MARKED AS SUCH. WITH REGARD TO THE QUESTION RELATING TO CIVILIAN OR MILITARY PERSONNEL PROVIDING ADVICE TO THE NICARAGUAN ARMED FORCES, THE ANSWER IS THAT AS IN MOST LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES THERE IS A UNITED STATES MILITARY MISSION COMPOSED OF, IN THE CASE OF NICARAGUA 17, U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL WHOSE FUNCTION IS TO ADVISE THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT ON MILITARY MATTERS ENTIRELY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE AGREED FUNCTIONS OF A U.S. MILGP. THE U.S. MILITARY MISSION IN NICARAGUA IS ONLY ENGAGED IN THOSE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES SPECIFIED IN THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. AT NO TIME HAVE MILGP PERSONNEL ACCOMPANIED NICARAGUAN MILITARY FORCES ENGAGED IN COMBAT OPERATIONAL MISSIONS OR FIELD EXERCISES. THE UNITED STATES MILITARY PARTICIPATE WITH CONECA

IN JOINT TRAINING EXERCISES ON AN INFREQUENT BASIS. CONDECA IS AN ORGANIZATION OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN MINISTERS OF DEFENSE. THE PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS OF THE MILGP INCLUDE MILITARY ADVICE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, ADVICE ON CIVIC ACTION, ADVICE REGARDING THE LOGISTICS, MAINTENANCE, TRAINING AND ADMINISTRATION. AS FAR AS THE EMBASSY IS AWARE, THE WAR POWERS ACT IS NOT GERMANE TO THESE ACTIVITIES.

(2) GUNTHER WAGNER WAS FORMERLY EMPLOYED UNDER THE AID'S PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM AS DIRECTOR OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM IN NICARAGUA. WITH THE TERMINATION OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM WORLDWIDE IN AUGUST 1974, MR. WAGNER DEPARTED POST, WAS RELEAS'D FROM THE AID AGENCY AND WAS SEPARATED IN WASHINGTON FROM UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT IN THE EARLY FALL OF 1974. SUBSEQUENT TO HIS SEPARATION FROM THE AID AGENCY, HE HAS HAD NO AFFILIATION, FINANCIAL, ADVISORY OR OTHERWISE, WITH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. WAGNER RETURNED TO NICARAGUA IN THE FALL OF 1974 TO ACCEPT A PERSONAL SERVICE CONTRACT WITH THE GON, FULLY FUNDED AND ADMINISTERED BY THE GON. MR. WAGNER HAS NO OFFICIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OR ANY OF ITS AGENCIES. MR. WAGNER, AS STATED ABOVE, WAS THE DIRECTOR OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY MISSION ADMINISTERED BY THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTED AND ADVISED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MANAGU 00607 121520Z

THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT IN IMPROVING ITS POLICE FORCE AND ENHANCE ITS PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY. SPECIFICALLY, HE WAS CHARGED WITH RECOMMENDING CHANGES IN LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS FOR THE POLICE FORCE, UPGRADING THE POLICE PROFESSION, INCLUDING THE POLICE ACADEMY, AND ESTABLISHING PERSONNEL STANDARDS IN RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING. THE CHARGES MADE BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST-ORIENTED SANDINISTA TERRORIST ORGANIZATION IN THEIR RADIO BROADCAST FROM HAVANA, CUBA, IS TOTALLY WITHOUT

FOUNDATION. MR. WAGNER DID NOT SUPERVISE, GIVE ADVICE OR PARTICIPATE IN COUNTER-INSURGENCY ACTIVITIES, TORTURE OR REPRESSION. THE EMBASSY NOR ANY OTHER RESPONSIBLE PERSON IN NICARAGUA AS FAR AS THE EMBASSY IS AWARE HAS EVER HEARD OF AN "ESCUADRON DE LA MUERTE" UNTIL THIS FABRICATION WAS BROADCAST OVER HAVANA RADIO. AS FAR AS THE EMBASSY IS AWARE NO RESPONSIBLE NICARAGUAN BELIEVES THAT SUCH A GROUP EXISTS, AND WE BELIEVE IT WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE COME TO OUR ATTENTION FROM OPPOSITION SOURCES AND FROM THE MEDIA IF SUCH AN ORGANIZATION HAD EXISTED.

(3) AS FAR AS THE EMBASSY IS AWARE AND AS FAR AS ANY NICARAGUANS WITH WHICH THE EMBASSY HAS CONTACT IS AWARE, EITHER OFFICIAL OR OPPOSITION, NO BRAZILIANS HAVE ENGAGED IN ADVISING LOCAL SECURITY FORCES OR OTHERWISE ASSISTED IN COUNTER-INSURGENCY PROGRAMS. THE EMBASSY IS UNAWARE OF ANY MILITARY PARTICIPATION BY THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT IN MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN NICARAGUA.

2. THE COUNTRY TEAM TRISTS THAT THE ABOVE OFFERS THE SPECIFIC DISCLAIMER TO THESE UNFOUNDED ALLEGATION MADE BY A PRO-COMMUNIST TERRORIST SANDINISTA GROUP. SHELTON

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